

NONFICTION: "The Race Against Death" • SKILL: Reading Comprehension

# "The Race Against Death" Quiz

**Directions:** Read "The Race Against Death." Then answer the multiple-choice questions below.

**1. Which sentence BEST summarizes the article?**

- (A) In 1925, Leonhard Seppala helped save a town in Alaska from a diphtheria epidemic.
- (B) In 1925, the mayor of Nome, Alaska, came up with a daring plan to save lives.
- (C) In 1925, relays of sled dog teams delivered life-saving medicine to a remote town in Alaska.
- (D) In 1925, diphtheria was extremely deadly.

**2. Why was transporting the diphtheria medicine by dogsled a risky plan?**

- (A) The vials could break or get lost in the snow.
- (B) Some mushers weren't familiar with the trails.
- (C) The sled dogs could get frostbite.
- (D) The sea was already partially frozen.

**3. Consider this sentence from the article:**

**"Today, most American children are vaccinated against diphtheria."**

**Why does the author include this information?**

- (A) to broaden the reader's understanding of the time period in which this story takes place
- (B) to argue that vaccines are effective
- (C) to suggest that children in other parts of the world are not vaccinated today
- (D) to show that diphtheria harms millions of children today

**4. What is a central theme of the article?**

- (A) Modern medicine saves millions of lives.
- (B) Much can be accomplished through teamwork.
- (C) Living in Alaska can be grueling and isolating.
- (D) Doctors are dedicated to helping their patients.

**5. Complete the following analogy:**

**vaccine : diphtheria ::**

- (A) tissue : sneeze
- (B) bandage : cut
- (C) sunscreen : sunburn
- (D) shin guards : soccer

**6. Which statement is NOT supported by information in the article?**

- (A) Many citizens of Nome would have died if the medicine had not arrived.
- (B) In 1925, there was no railroad to Nome.
- (C) Some Nome officials thought the medicine could be brought in by boat.
- (D) People all over the country were concerned about the medicine getting safely to Nome.

**7. Which sentence from the article contains personification?**

- (A) "In a matter of hours, the coating could block Billy's windpipe and kill him."
- (B) "With little warning, the ice might break up and carry them out to the Bering Sea."
- (C) "For the next 20 miles, the wind beat mercilessly at Kaasen and his dogs."
- (D) "He staggered off the sled, stumbled up to Balto, and collapsed, muttering, 'Fine dog.'"

**8. Based on what you know from the article, the author would most likely agree that**

- (A) the medicine could have been delivered to Nome faster if more mushers were involved.
- (B) the blizzard was not that bad.
- (C) Kaasen was not a crucial part of the relay.
- (D) the mushers and their dogs risked their lives.

**Directions:** Write your answers on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

**9. What characteristics do Balto and the other sled dogs have in common with Buck from the excerpt of *The Call of the Wild*? Use textual evidence to support your ideas.**

**10. Find three examples of sensory language in the story. How do these phrases or passages contribute to the overall tone of the article?**